

Earth



First!

No.3

30p

ACTION UPDATE (UK)

Spring '92

DON'T LET TWYFORD DOWN!



Greg and Flynnie upholding EC Law!

Photo:Rod.LV.

Two recent actions at Twyford Down broke national news. Roger from Lea Valley recalls the events.

18th February

The real fun began after a whole day of waiting and seeing. The police had asked us all to move off or note facing an injunction for arrest. But it gave us Earth First!ers an opportunity

to take stock of the situation, and after holding a meeting, we were driven to the A33 bypass. Aided by a beautiful moon, we crossed under the old railway viaduct, and over fields towards our target - a crane on the southernmost of the two bridges due for demolition. The contractors had laid out their equipment almost to our satisfaction -

the controls for the lights being right next to the the field we came off - so switches were thrown and the whole bridge plunged into darkness. People scrambled onto the crane and chained themselves, etc... Quite quickly the whole area was flooded by light, from T.V. crews who had lain inwait, expecting some form of eco-tage. The Twyford Down Association came from one direction and added to the confusion with their own protest! The police and contractors were quite thrown out by all this - add to this people singing and waving banners on the other side of the bridge and the scene was set for an evening's entertainment, with food and drinks generously provided by the locals.

It took the police a whole one and a half hours before they could get reinforcements in and get the situation "under control" and make arrests. Amongst those arrested was a Green Party member! The contractors began work again at 11.20 and poor Jason, kryptonited to an axle, had to endure their going ons until he was rescued about twelve thirty, someone having finally discovered the key around his neck.

CARMAGEDDON
National Day of
Action!
London 15th May.

TIMBMET
THE BIG ONE
Oxford Rainforest Network 11th May
International day of action

SARAWAK
DELEGATION
LONDON 15TH MAY
11AM

TWYFORD: DOWN AND OUT?

Following an injunction on FOE activists the bulldozers finally went in, decimating woodland and carving off top soil. With only 3 days notice over 70 EF! activists got together from all over the country to halt the illegal destruction.

21st March

This was a quiet day to begin with. After a planning meeting at the old army camp overlooking Twyford Down and the Itchen valley, us Earth First!ers went many different ways, some to Winchester, others to Hockley Traffic lights to set up placards and banners and some to stop the work. People climbed on top of dozers and trucks until all work had ceased. Greg and Flynnie occupied a truck on the highway and had a hard time at the hands of the Police before being arrested.

Flynnie plans to fight the case.

The main focus of the day came after Twyford Down Association had spelled out the word 'STOP' upon the topsoil stripped hillside. People poured down the hill, TDA and EF! people merged and blockaded the A33, creating long tailbacks! Banners were stretched across the road, people sat down, and the music played on! The police were rather quicker this time in responding - about twenty minutes - but they still faced problems because as one lot of people were moved off the road, another lot came on behind! This yo-yo effect went on for more than an hour and in the midst of it all, some activists attempted to cut away the artificial banks holding back the Itchen Navigation in order to flood the work site. A total of six people were arrested. Perhaps the biggest surprise of the day was how the police came up with an effective way to keep the traffic flowing from all directions by creating makeshift sliproads using just twenty-eight cones. At a stroke they had demonstrated a freebie solution which ridicules the government's £45 million proposals for Twyford Down.

Brighton in February

One morning in a respectable sea-side town, British Telecom workers arrived at work to find it bricked-up. Shock horror. What could 800 phone books have been doing, loitering with intent, outside their offices at such an early hour? Oh no, not those damned Earth First!ers again. "They've got the wrong end of the stick", journalists and TV reporters were told.

Only three million phone directories are made from recycled paper in the whole country. None are recyclable. The non-biodegradable glue in the spine, and the yellow dye, make it a problem for waste paper company's profit margins. Oh dear, more firms going to the wall. Never mind, chin up. It is about time that BT, who make £95 profit a second, takes responsibility for their huge wastage.

Other companies use biodegradable glue, and some phone companies collect their old books for recycling. BT has answered that it is "researching the possibilities". Well let's hope it has researched them adequately before next year. For as one manager - no names please - told us, "This is great. With more demonstrations like this, head office will have to do something about it."

Oh, by the by, if you feel that your actions should mirror your words, it is all very well to moralise "You profit at the Earth's expense. Now you pay for it." There is, however, a reply-paid card in every phone book...

South Downs Earth First!

ACTION DIARY

May 10-11th Oxford timbmet blockade.

May 15th Carmageddon day of Action and Sarawak Delegation.

May 21st Valley of the Aspe- French Embassy.

July 16-26th Valley of the Aspe- Summer camp.

August 3rd - Temperate Rainforest Action Day.

Fisons to Sell

Fisons have recently announced that they are to sell their peat extraction business! On Monday 13 April £100,000 damage was done to Fisons peat digging equipment on Hatfield and Thorne moors South Yorkshire. As two of the last four remaining lowland peat bogs in England they are designated as sites of special scientific interest and are home to 25 endangered species. Despite this, Fisons has been digging up five and a half thousand acres of peat.

Whoever disabled the machinery phoned the press association and claimed it the responsibility of Earth First! The press immediately started ringing the Lea Valley office putting us ignorant folk on the spot. Opinion about the action at the gathering was mixed but it was generally agreed that it was an individual act and that claiming it as the responsibility of EF! was unfair to those in the movement who disagreed with it.

Oxford May 11th Day of Action

26 countries in the North and South are taking part in this day of outrage against the continuing exploitation and destruction of tropical rainforests.

Timbmet is the second largest timber wholesaler in the country - 70 truckloads leave the yard everyday. The action intends to stop this filthy business for the day and by doing so draw attention to it.

Come and be a part of this action which promises to be the biggest ever in Europe:

Sunday May 10th. Cumnor village hall 10am - 7pm. Workshops prepare activists on everything from peaceful direct action to legal details.

Bring with you: food, a tent, sleeping bag and banners.

Contact: 5pm-7pm Mon.- Fri.

ONLY!(lets respect their space yeh!)

0865 792168 ask for Ginny or Chris. FAX: 0865 724317

MERSEY DOCK OCCUPATION DELAYS DEAD RAINFOREST

It could only happen in Liverpool! This was Europe's largest and longest rainforest demo yet, with over 400 people from everywhere (UK, US and Germany), we showed the bastards what we thought of rainforest destruction.



The Action enjoyed a wide range of support! Photo: Nick Jukes

The whole atmosphere was one of fun and friendship (even with the pigs!) and so there was never really any hostility between anyone as everyone was sympathetic.

On the first day we stormed the fences, occupied cranes, piles of dead rainforest, observation towers and machinery; we hung banners off everything and blocked the busy dock road causing confusion to the press and Police. Oh the press...they went crazy, full front page on the Liverpool Echo (massive readership) and coverage throughout the national media.

Police relations were good; because of full liaison work, violence on both sides was prevented and we all got on like good mates. This was helped with good legal backup,

and non-violence training from experienced CND activists. The demo went ahead despite the delayed arrival of the ship so people stayed up the cranes all night in anticipation whilst other people got off to Barrow for the launch of Trident.

The second day saw a complete change in attitude by the authorities. They'd let us have our fun on the first day and they were determined that the ship would dock on the Wednesday. Under fear of violence, our press office got the media straight down there - our strongest weapon against foul play, but already the Police were wading in and holding people illegally in a big cage, like animals, in a warehouse.

As the ship came out of the lock hundreds of heads dropped as we saw the name 'NIPS'. Activists occupied capstans and ladders on the dock side, before being dragged off by the police, meanwhile people banged a deafening din on the fences all day. The dockers refused to unlock whilst any of us were in any danger (good one!), but in the end, the giant piles of once beautiful Rainforest were unloaded.

The good points:

No in fighting amongst activists, good relations with Dockers, Press and police. Good facilities laid on (food and accommodation - all donated); the feeling of strength, confidence and achievement.

The bad points:

The failure of other national groups to support the demonstration. The feeding of false information by the police, and one pig who liked violence. The hesitancy and slow thinking by activists (more could have got over the fence) and people doing very dangerous stunts - dicing with death ("You're mad, Colin").

Love to Marissa and the two coppers who were accidentally injured.

Please could anyone return any Kryptonites as we are fast approaching debt; and if anyone has any photos or press clippings could you send us copies as we are compiling a booklet.

Love and Peace

Simon (Merseyside EF!)



Gotcha! However about 40 activists made it to the cranes. Photo: Rod, LV

NETWORK VIEWS

VOICE OF THE MOVEMENT

Sharing ideas is vital to the growth of the movement so please send letters to: Action Update, Lea Valley Office, P.O.Box 2573, London N16 6HN. For those techno minded folk, it really helps if text is on an ASCII 3.5 disc or better still use greenet to E:mail stuff to; GN: Jtorrance.

Monkeying-Around

"Violence... confrontation... extremist.. warrior class"

All labels attached to EFL by the national press, and it won't be the last time we are represented in such a way. Hopefully our actions will speak louder than their words, but my faith in the dynamics of the media do not always stretch this far. So called 'violence to property', or monkey-wrenching provokes many a varied reaction. Destroying a bulldozer is seen by some as little but mindless vandalism, by others as the only means to stop its assault on the earth. Many journalists do not seem to understand the difference between the acts of individuals, and group actions. Are we to see the birth of the Earth Liberation Front in this country as other countries have witnessed, the nocturnal activities of crazed individuals determined to wreak vengeance on the industrial society that has spawned them?

love and grit
Bolt Cutter

Forum, or for'em

So what is it to be, this lil'ole Action Update of ours? Last 'edition', I tried to recognize the article a couple of us had written must have got scrambled in the post, had bits added, cut, that kind of stuff...A journal can be a conduit of information, a forum for discussion, a propaganda tool, many things. But for it to be open to all at grass-roots level, and not just for the few is a different question. Are you sitting comfortably, boys and girls? Let me tell you a story... There's a newspaper in Christiania, the Danish Freetown, that includes all articles it receives, and refuses to edit. The editors co-ordinate the process, but in this way avoid wielding their subjective power. Can we find our own way, or will someone else do it for us? I think we should be told... No, I think we should tell ourselves.

Love and words,
Bowd L'Erize
South Downs Earth First!

The splendid resources of the AU consist of : 2 hands, a borrowed computer and a lot of waving a frayed shoestring at a sympathetic printer. In defense of Harry (name changed) last issues ed. . He had to knock it out inbetween coordinating the roadshow. Oh how I dream of a collective of objective editors while I sit here manically trying to condense this wad of articles into an AU thin enough to fit under your door (and not break the bank). So Bowd L'Erize, come lay your gentle fingers on my keyboard and together we can make your vision come true. Ed.

Consumption Hypocrisy?

As a movement EFL prides itself on empowering individuals. Giving them control over their defense of the environment. We often state how different we are to the more established environmental pressure groups and indeed we are. However on one major level we are totally the same. We do not challenge people to recognise their own part in the

Turn on ,Tune In ,Drop In.

Earth First! is like an 'outside-fire'.

I'm not talking about dropping a little lit match somewhere on a wet day. I don't mean just one of those little smoke signals going up, 'cause your name ain't Geronimo'. Cause once you get an outside-fire started you can't control it. And you could end up with a wild-fire. And wild-fires do have a tendency to spread".

-Millie Jackson, my gurul What is Earth First!? It is nothing if it is not something that people feel. It must throw off sparks, and spread. Sparks born simply of individual concern for the environment. Sparks that lead someone to take non-violent direction action in defence of the earth that they care for. The moral of this story you might ask? Anybody can start by getting the fire started right here. Your next-door neighbour may be entirely different from you, but the spark may be there. The only way to find out, and so see things change is to try. Try helping that fire - start an Earth First! group. The heat is on.

Bryant May
South Downs Earth! First



(hypocrisy Continued)

destruction of the planet and third world peoples. We do not challenge their consumerism. Tea, Coffee, tobacco and Peanuts (all consumed in large quantities at the recent gathering) are cash crops. In the case of peanuts their cultivation is destroying vast areas of topsoil in Africa; making the land useless for any future agricultural use. If we chose not to consume these and other third world products the land could be freed to give to the local people to grow food. Let us as a movement and as individuals strive to reduce or eliminate our consumption of cash crops. Please think about your consumption, your lifestyle. For it is these every bit as much as Governments, banks and multinationals that are destroying the Earth and causing the deaths of thousands of our fellow humans. Lets change ourselves as well as trying to change others.

Keith Johnson

Brighton Gathering: Consensus on Direction

The following are draft guidelines drawn up at the Earth First! gathering on 18th-19th April. A primary aim of the gathering was to define what exactly Earth First! is, and we decided that the best way of defining what we are would be to prepare a statement on our aims, methods, and principles. The following are draft rules so if you weren't at the gathering but want to express an opinion or disagreement then contact the update.

AIMS

- To defend the environment
- To confront and expose those destroying the environment.
- To realise a human lifestyle that exists in balance and harmony with the natural world and that has respect for all life.

METHODS

We will achieve these aims by:

- empowering individuals and groups to take direct and focused action against those destroying the environment.
- networking information and contacts between action groups to facilitate the growth of a movement and encourage group autonomy.
- by raising funds for direct action campaigns and networking costs.

PRINCIPLES

The following are principles within which all groups have agreed to work.

1. Local groups should be empowered and supported to organise and network their own campaigns and actions. Local groups organising an action can lay down ground rules for that action. Other groups involved should be informed of, respect, and comply with these rules.
2. We recognise that some people may feel moved to damage property. We neither condemn nor condone such actions. Such actions are the sole responsibility of the individuals involved.
3. We agree that violence towards living things is not a legitimate tactic in environmental campaigns. Therefore we will follow strict principles of non-violence when confronting the destruction of the environment.
4. We recognise the diversity of opinion within the environment movement and support the genuine efforts of other environmentalists in defending the earth.

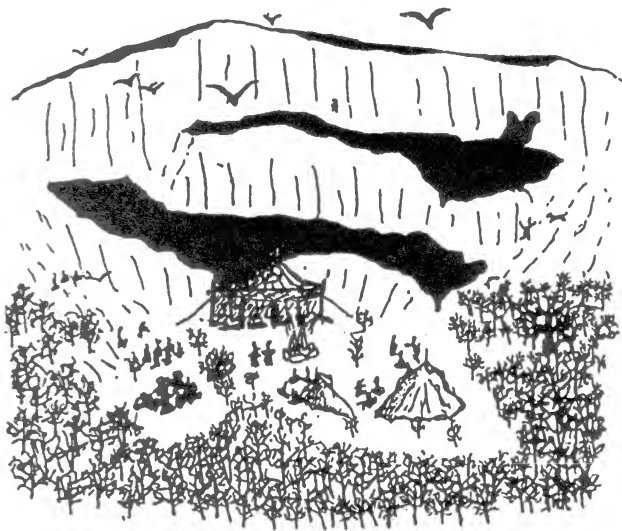
SEXISM & SEPARATISM

Dissolving the Division

One of the resolutions of the Brighton Gathering was a Consensus agreement on respect for *Women-only space* within the EF! movement. **Rowan from Oxford** discusses why this is valuable.

Ecology and feminism have been recognised as intrinsically bound together, and often referred to as "eco-feminism". Eco-feminists believe that it is impossible to stop the domination of by the patriarchy without also redressing the gender imbalance. If we are to facilitate this process the most important step is to recognise that a division exists between the sexes. One way of doing this is to positively set aside separate gender space and know that it is to ultimately dissolve the division.

Nick and myself ran a workshop on the theme at the Brighton gathering as we have both been aware of sexism within EF!. Men dominating in their numbers, attitudes, expression of machismo in actions and vocally in meetings.



At the workshop some men expressed objections \ fears about women only space giving rise to aggressively expressed exclusion of men by strident separatists and the possibility of a breakdown in communication at actions. My responses to this are:

1. People should be encouraged to voice their fears\objections in a workshop forum. It is not appropriate to discuss these issues in either a women only space or during actions when feelings are running high.

2. Womens oppression is typified in the difficulties they have in expressing anger. Men who have experienced this have felt the impact of that womans rage at her own personal experiences and those of millions of women over thousands of years. I am not trying to justify, but to put these situations in context.

3. Many politically active women will not join EF! unless there is women only space. Such women have a valuable contribution to make.

4. It is necessary for men to respect women only space and trust that women are equally capable of assessing difficult situations that arise and acting accordingly. Women are also aware of the need for communication with others during actions.

Nick and myself both noticed a significant change in attitudes at the Brighton Gathering and we believe that this is a response to increased awareness of these issues.

Malaysia File

World Bank Report brands Malaysian forestry: "a Sunset Industry".

A recent report on a survey of Malaysian forestry carried out by the world bank concludes that a 'drastic slowdown' in the rate of logging is needed to stop the extinction of the industry (and hundreds of creatures!). The report called for an immediate reduction of 260% in the annual area of primary forest logged. It cited 'institutional weaknesses' and 'private incentives which favour unsustainable approaches' (corruption and greed!) as obstacles to sustainable forestry. It said the industry should accept 'normal rates of return, not exorbitant profits'. The



The Penan: sustainable. Photo: Rod.L.V
Bank forecasts that at current rates the forests of Malaysia will be exhausted by the mid 90's making the industry a 'sunset industry'. The report estimated that 700 thousand indigenous people rely on forests in Sarawak for their livelihood making use of 2 million hectares of forest; each hectare of 'undisturbed forest continuously provides non-wood products with a net value between US\$312 - \$810 annually'. On this basis the report is unenthusiastic about the continued expansion of plantations, favouring instead community forestry such as growing Durian. Its a shame that the bank has to see everything in dollar signs but positive that they have come down on our side for once!

Foreign News

Malaysia in EF! Smear

An outrageous article in the New Straits Times 27-4 opens by saying that: "Several environmental organisations in the West have become aggressive and are threatening to use violence and terrorism in their smear campaign against tropical timber". The article quotes primary industries minister Dr.Lim in his address to the 21st world forestry day as saying: "Earth First! has even predicted that explosives will be required to attack tropical timber depots and stores".

Delegation to London

On May 15th Dr Lim will arrive in London as part of a delegation due to visit 5 European countries. He said of the visit that: "I will tell them in no uncertain terms that they have to do something because these groups are resorting to illegal acts such as not letting ships come into ports.....I will tell the governments that these groups are using terrorism to threaten users of tropical timber"

The delegation has promised a meeting with NGO's, however attempts by NGO's to arrange this meeting have found embassy staff unwilling to co-operate and as yet nothing has been fixed. It is feared that the delegation may just fix private meetings with groups and journalists sympathetic to rainforest genocide. Well Doctor Lim EF! is looking forward to meeting you!

Burma - The Heat is on

Manerplaw, base of the democracy forces and home of the environment and human rights centre, supported by EF! and LRA, has been under immense pressure this dry season. In an all out offensive the Burmese army pushed 20,000 troops to within 10km of the base. Here 4000 democracy 'rebels' held out for several months at 'Mad Dog Hill' against superior firepower. Karen tribal villagers were subjected to appalling atrocities during the campaign. Thankfully several recent developments have brought a small reprieve for the democracy movement. Ruling General Saw Muang has resigned. At a recent banquet he equated himself to an old Burmese God of loneliness and paranoia, before drawing his gun and threatening to shoot the audience of notables. These

Clearcut Business Not Rainforest

British Columbia seems a distant land from the U.K, the screams of the chainsaws can't be heard; the fall of the forest giants and their replacement with the barren world of clearcuts and tree farms, appears removed from life over here. But in terms of world economics Britain is involved, we are a customer importing 13% of our board and paper and 20% of our pulp from Canada.

Timber trade concerns, in this country and elsewhere, are always looking for expansion, British Columbia House in London, are encouraging a growth market for Temperate Rainforest products in this country. On the 22nd of February Earth First! with a 12ft walking, talking tree in tow brought a bit of truth and carnival to the drab habitat of B.C House in down-town Regents Street. About 30 protesters came along handing out leaflets and waving banners, the tree staggered about, crossing back and forth across the busy streets, puzzling tourists and stopping traffic.

As the media arrived we chatted for a while, pointing to the seriousness of the situation in B.C, less than 10 years before the remaining unprotected rainforest is logged, blah, blah, blah. As we talked I watched their eyes roll upwards, boredom! I turned around, to a brilliant sight, a large green and orange banner, reading "Canada's throwaway forests?", was being pulled up the front of the building by two intrepid Earth First! climbers. The press became excited, the tree jumped up and down, and we cheered as the banner swung up high for all to see. Our observant police guardians finally

bouts of madness culminated in a nervous breakdown. Unfortunately his replacement: Than Shwe is no better, described as a "vicious field commander".

The offensive is now off and a token number of political prisoners has been released, all part of a PR exercise to keep foreign investment in the country. Meanwhile the forests are falling to be sold to companies like Timbmet and the money used for arms.

Pepsi is investing in Burma and Michael Jacksons upcoming tour is sponsored by them, so how about an Action!

Local groups are badly needed as collection points for material such as: environmental magazines or books you've read. Phone for the address or send them to the Lea Valley office and we will ship them over. Rod. LV.

MASS ARREST SHOWS SOLIDARITY FOR TRIBAL TRIAL.

...BC House cont.



Getting cosy in Piccadilly

Rod.LV.

On Monday March 23rd 29 rainforest activists from Earth First! groups from Oxford, London and Liverpool, Rainforest Action Groups from East Anglia and London, blockaded the Malaysian Airlines office in Piccadilly, London.

The action had been called by Angie Zelter of Reforest the Earth in solidarity with the 31 tribal people in Sarawak facing trial that day for blockading logging roads. Each protester had adopted the name of one of the tribal people for the day and wore it on a t-shirt or placard.

We arrived at 10.00 am and rapidly slipped chains and Kryptonite bike locks through the handles on the door. We then chained ourselves to each other, forming a somewhat unseemly pile of bodies on the pavement of London's most exclusive shopping street.

The bizarre multi-limbed organism then set up a chant of "TAKE IT BACK TO SARAWAK" (interspersed with cries of "oy, get off my fucking leg"). In true British fashion most passers by walked straight past pretending that this was a perfectly ordinary sight for a Monday morning - the police took it somewhat differently. However they did little other than warn us that we were blocking a right of way, and at one point

inexplicably appeared to be stopping all traffic in Piccadilly (in a sympathy action?).

After an hour and a half the special diplomatic unit arrived with monster bolt cutters and swooped, needlessly shoving people about. As usual, though, even the meatheads of the London constabulary were broadly sympathetic. Their tolerance became somewhat more strained at Vine Street police station when they found that we insisted on giving our adopted names and were fully prepared to stay overnight and face the magistrate the following morning.

We had been hoping to keep our adopted names so that we could all come to face charges in solidarity with our Dayak names. However after 5 hours in London's most crowded and generally disgusting police cells the police gave up and released us all without charges. This means that although hundreds of people have been arrested in the past 10 months in Britain's rapidly radicalising and growing environment movement, not one person has yet been sentenced. Several of us had never been arrested before and left empowered and prepared for the next action.

George Marshall (LRAG)

realized what was occurring, calling up reinforcements and arresting the climbers as they came down. Later the tree followed the cops to Vine Street police station, walking in and demanding "what have you done with my protectors", until it was thrown out by an irate copper. The two arrested were later bound over for the sum of hundred pounds for six months.

This action attracted headline news across Canada, (and created some debate in trade magazines), showing the forest destroyers and those in power that it's customers are becoming aware and getting angry.

In a follow up action to this Earth First! attended the B.C House arranged reception for a "Living with Cedar" trade fair. Their propaganda stated that Cedar was an "ecologically sound" product? Us "misdirected" enviro's had to be contradictory though, Cedar is a temperate rainforest tree, we argued. Practically all of the cut comes from Old Growth forest (irreplaceable) and the plantations won't be ready for

'harvesting' for another 70-100 years, very responsible forestry! The argument that large areas of the remaining old growth should be saved for its own intrinsic sake as a wilderness area was not even part of the agenda, **trees equal money to these greedheads.**

We had planned direct action for the reception, but security guards, a barred door and low numbers ruled it out. So we had to be content with leaflets and talking and arguing with the timber trade and embassy people as they left. Some support for us was voiced and some interesting contacts were made, but the majority of timber people still seem intent on generating a growth market in the U.K (and elsewhere) for their products. When the source of this growth is unsustainable then this insane mentality must be confronted. Upcoming actions to turn the tide of forest genocide include; hounding the trade outlets of endangered B.C tree products, these include picketing trade fairs, making trade specifiers aware!, (companies that are usually being encouraged to use Cedar are one's that specialize in outdoor products, greenhouse's, porches, garden furniture, etc, keep your eyes open!). **On the 3rd of August, 92 all hell breaks loose worldwide as an international Earth First! day of action shuts down Temperate rainforest imports. A dock blockade and other things are in the pipeline, sssch. Peter (Lea Valley)**

Subscribe To The EF!AU

The action update is produced on every Solstice and Equinox, it has expanded on every issue in order to cover the rapidly expanding Earth First! movement in this country.

By the end of this year we hope to be producing something as good as the Earth First! Journal, based in Missoula, Montana, USA. The Earth First! Journal will be a forum for the Earth First! movements news, views and needs. It will represent our outrage against the destruction of Mother Earth! So subscribe by sending your life savings to the address below and you'll receive the Butterfly that this Caterpillar is going to turn into.

Please send me a full years worth of the Earth First! Action Update (soon to be the Earth First! Journal) and other Action Alerts. Here is three pounds.

Name: _____

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Okay!!, Money grabbing parasites. Here is an additional donation to the Earth First! movement £ _____, _____ (Cheques payable to Earth First!)

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